

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

July 9, 2021

The Honorable Merrick B. Garland  
Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland,

As members of the California congressional delegation, we write to you again regarding the illegal marijuana grow operations in our state. While we are grateful for your previous work in addressing a portion of these grows<sup>1</sup>, we write asking you to address the ongoing operations in the surrounding areas, particularly in San Bernardino County and Los Angeles County. The issue remains untenable for residents living in these areas.

We continue to hear from our constituents of heinous incidents of intimidation, coercion, and violence being used by illegal growers to ensure that their operations are undisturbed. Not only do these criminals threaten the residents, but they are damaging our public lands and water resources. On multiple occasions, illegal grows have been discovered stealing water from the communities they inhabit. It is estimated that at the end of 2020, illegal marijuana grows were illegally consuming between 11 and 36 million liters of water daily. With the drought conditions the state faces, we cannot allow these illegal operations to exacerbate this problem further.

In 2020, illegal grow operations increased in Southern California by as much as 300% in some areas. This problem is not going away, and it will only get worse without your continued direct intervention.

We request that you continue to utilize whatever authority is available to you to address this crisis in our communities, including prosecuting these criminals to the fullest extent allowable under the law to cut off the escalating fear and violence in our districts. Decisive action is needed now. Every day that these criminals continue to operate with impunity hurts our constituents and California as a whole.

We appreciate your continued attention to this critical matter. We look forward to working with you to address the issue.

Sincerely,



Jay Obernolte  
Member of Congress



Mike Garcia  
Member of Congress

<sup>1</sup><https://theavtimes.com/2021/06/08/multi-agency-raids-target-cartel-operated-marijuana-grows-in-antelope-valley-area/>